Production of tea during the last three years is as under:

Year	Production of tea (in Million'kgs)
2005	945.97
2006 (E)	953.90
2007 (E)	944.68

(E) Estimated and subject to revision.

(d) A Special Purpose Tea Fund has been set up for extending financial assistance by way of long term loan and subsidy for encouraging the tea gardens in taking up large scale uprooting and replanting/rejuvenation of the old age tea bushes. It is targeted to take up replanting and rejuvenation in an area of 2,12,000 hectares spread over for the period of next 15 years.

(e) There is no proposal to set up new gardens. At present there are no tea plantations in Uttar Pradesh.

Security concerns in Indian Ocean

†653. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether security concerns in Indian Ocean are aggravating;

(b) whether Naval officers have expressed their apprehension about L.T.T.E. also;

(c) whether experts have opined that this threat would further enhance after construction of Setusamudram canal; and

(d) the names of countries which are being contacted for modernization of Navy?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K.. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Indian Ocean Region faces security threats on account of territorial disputes, trade and goods movements along sealanes, low intensity maritime threats, economic offences from the sea, etc. There are reports of certain terrorists being imparted training and likelihood of their infiltration through sea routes. However, India's coastal waters are well guarded by Indian Navy and Coast Guard and therefore threat perception of any nature can always be taken care of. In order to meet the modernization requirement of the Indian Navy, procurement/acquisition of items are made from various indigenous as well as foreign sources, including Russia, France, Germany, USA, UK, Israel, etc.

Resentment due to low wages

654. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of DEFFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is lot of resentment among the armed forces over the issue of lower wages; and

(b) if so, the steps Government has taken to ameliorate the distress?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Pay, allowances and other benefits are granted to the Armed Forces Personnel as per Government orders issued from time to time. These are also examined by the Pay Commissions set up by the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.